

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SPC-03 AID-20 EB-11 NSC-10

RSC-01 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 SS-20 STR-08 OMB-01 CEA-02

INT-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

PA-04 PRS-01 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 COME-00 DRC-01

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R 240945Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7692

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG 4318

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: ENRG PFOR JA

SUBJ: REPORTS OF COOPERATIVE EFFORT TO DEVELOP EAST CHINA SEA

REF: TOKYO 13420

SUMMARY. JAPANESE PRESS REPORTS PM TANAKA HAS PROPOSED THAT U.K., FRANCE, U.S. AND JAPAN COOPERATE WITH PRC IN DEVELOPMENT OF OIL RESOURCES IN EAST CHINA SEA. FONOFF CONFIRMED TANAKA DID RAISE GENERAL SUBJECT WITH HEATH, BUT BELIEVES PRESENT REPORT ONLY TRIAL BALLOON WHICH PRC ALMOST CERTAIN TO REJECT. COULD ALSO REPRESENT ATTEMPT IMPROVE JAPANESE BARGAINING POSITION VIS-A-VIS SOVIET

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UNION IN TYUMEN OIL DISCUSSIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. INFLUENTIAL JAPANESE BUSINESS DAILY, NIHON KEIZAI, CARRIES FRONT PAGE REPORT OCT 24 TO EFFECT THAT PM TANAKA HAS PROPOSED MULTI-NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF OIL RESOURCES IN EAST CHINA SEA, BASED ON CONDITION THAT PRC APPROVES. IN ADDITION TO PRC, FOUR COUNTRIES REPORTEDLY INVOLVED WOULD BE U.S., U.K., FRANCE, AND JAPAN. BRITISH AND FRENCH LEADERS ARE SAID TO HAVE RESPONDED FAVORABLY TO PM TANAKA'S PROPOSAL, WHICH WAS MADE DURING TANAKA'S RECENT VISIT TO EUROPE.

2. NIHON KEIZAI ARTICLE, WHICH BASED ON JAPANESE BUSINESS COMMUNITY SOURCES, CONTINUES THAT PROJECT, IF REALIZED, WOULD BE LARGER THAN EITHER NORTH SEA OIL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OR TYUMEN PIPELINE PROJECT IN USSR. SUCCESS OF PROJECT, HOWEVER, IS UP TO PRC, ARTICLE SAYS, AND NOTES THAT PRC HAS IN PAST TAKEN NEGATIVE POSITION TOWARD RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT JOINT VENTURES WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. REPORTED RATIONALE FOR INCLUDING BRITAIN AND FRANCE IS THEIR FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH PRC, WHICH COULD HELP IN ADJUSTING DIFFICULT TERRITORIAL DISPUTES BETWEEN JAPAN AND PRC. U.S. REPORTEDLY INCLUDED QUOTE IN ORDER TO AVOID EXCESSIVE COMPETITION UNQUOTE. ARTICLE CONTAINS NO SPECIFICS ON REPORTED PROPOSAL.

3. EMBASSY NOTES THAT FONOFF SOURCE, IN BRIEFING ON RESULTS OF PM TANAKA'S VISIT TO U.K. (SEE REFTEL PARA 5 -NOTAL) MENTIONED THAT TANAKA HAD DISCUSSED COOPERATION IN DEVELOPMENT OF CHINESE CONTINENTAL SHELF OIL RESOURCES WITH HEATH IN LONDON. SAME FONOFF SOURCE (KATAKURA, DEPUTY HEAD OF INTERNATIONAL RESOURCES DIV) TOL EMBOFF OCT 24, HOWEVER, THAT HE HAD NO INFORMATION THAT THIS SUBJECT WAS DISCUSSED WITH FRENCH. ADDED THAT HE INCLINED TO BELIEVE PRESS REPORT WAS TRIAL BALLOON LAUNCHED BY QUOTE CERTAIN BUSINESSMEN UNQUOTE. FONOFF CHINA DIV SOURCE AGREED WITH LATTER COMMENT AND SAID HE BELIEVED IT VERY UNLIKELY CHINESE WOULD MAKE 180 DEGREE POLICY SHIFT WHICH WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ACCEPT THIS PROPOSAL. LDP DIETMAN FUJII ALSO TOLD PRESS ON RETURN FROM RECENT VISIT TO PRC THAT JOINT RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WERE CONTRARY TO PRC PRINCIPLE OF SELF SUFFICIENCY.

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4. COMMENT. INDICATIONS ARE THAT SOURCE OF THIS REPORT MAY HAVE BEEN HIROKI IMAZATO, PRESIDENT OF OVERSEAS PETROLEUM CORP (WHICH IS COORDINATING FIRM FOR TYUMEN PROJECT). EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS IMAZATO HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN RECENT DISCUSSIONS ON PRC OIL DEVELOPMENT. IT IS OPEN TO QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHETHER IMAZATO IS SERIOUSLY TRYING TO PUSH THIS MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME IN EAST CHINA SEA, OR WHETHER HE MERELY TRYING TO IMPROVE HIS BARGAINING POSITION VIS-A-VIS SOVIETS

IN NEGOTIATIONS ON TYUMEN PROJECTS.
INGERSOLL

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